

BAT WEEK 2017

Looking for a fun but educational Halloween activity that includes learning about bats, making a bat craft, and pledging to support bat conservation?

Montana Fish, Wildlife and Parks has created some easy activities to support national Bat Week (October 24-31) with an idea of educating the public on the important role bats play in our ecosystem and encouraging everyone to help protect these important critters through some very simple actions.

In this packet you will find:

A pledge of easy steps to encourage bat protection. Return your signed pledge to any local Fish, Wildlife and Parks office.

A list of cool bat facts we need to share with others and myths that we need to dispel.

A design for an easy bat craft your local Fish, Wildlife and Parks office would love to display. Return your completed craft to any local office.



Check out more cool ideas for helping bats at batweek.org!

GO TO BAT FOR BATS

You don't have to have special powers or a lot of money to help bats. There are many actions, both great and small, that you can take to help conserve bats and the places where they live.

Which important actions do you commit to follow?

Every action is important to protect bats and the places they live!!

PLEDGE CARD

I, _____
(sign your name above)

pledge to take the following actions to help conserve bats and their habitats. Commit to at least three actions!



____ **Learn more about fascinating bats**, the benefits of bats, and the threats they face. Write a bat fact on a paper bat you make and turn it into Fish, Wildlife and Parks for display!

____ **Spread the word** about the value of bats to at least one other person – have them sign a pledge card, too.

____ **Turn off your lights** when they aren't needed. Research shows that bat activity is generally lower in well-lit areas.

____ **Make a poster or write a report** for your classroom on the value of bats.

____ **Dispel the myths.** Tell others that fewer than 1% of all healthy-looking bats have rabies.

____ **Promise to never touch a sick or dead bat.** Tell an adult so the bat can be safely removed and the appropriate professionals can gather information that may help other bats.

____ **Host a Bat Week Party!** You can feature bat-themed games, foods and drinks made possible by bats, costumes, or bat house building – anything that highlights our amazing bats!

____ **Build and install a bat house** (*batweek.org has free plans*).

____ **Keep pets (especially cats) indoors.** Cat attacks are one of the most common causes of bat deaths in urban environments.

____ **Create a compost pile.** This will create excellent habitat for insects, which can attract bats.

____ **Plant a native bat garden** that will attract insects that bats like to eat. Examples of bat-friendly plants and shrubs include evening primrose, bergamot, goldenrods, asters, rosemary, lemon balm, lavender, common buttonbush, chives, and mints.

Mail this form back to Montana Fish, Wildlife and Parks (PO Box 200701, Helena, MT 59620), drop it off at your nearest Fish, Wildlife and Parks office or at the Montana Wild Education Center near Spring Meadow Park.

All About Bats



MYTHS AND TRUTHS:

MYTH: Bats are blind.

TRUTH: All bats can see. In fact, some bats have eyesight that is three times better vision than humans!

MYTH: All bats have rabies.

TRUTH: Less than 1% of bats have rabies. However it is always best to avoid handling any wild animal, including bats.

MYTH: Bats are dirty.

TRUTH: Bats are extremely clean and groom themselves like cats.

MYTH: Bats are rodents or flying mice.

TRUTH: Bats are not rodents. Unlike mice, most bats have only one baby at a time and live long lives.

MYTH: Bats attack people.

TRUTH: Bats do not attack. They are afraid of humans and avoid people when they can.

MYTH: Bats suck blood.

TRUTH: Bats do not suck blood. However, Vampire bats do exist and they do drink blood from non-human animals.

10 FUN FACTS ABOUT BATS:

1) Bats are the only mammals that fly. Scientists classify them into an order called "Chiroptera" which means "hand-wing."

2) There are more than 1,300 species of bats in the world.

3) One insect-eating bat can consume 2,000-6,000 insects in a single night!

4) Bats are important in controlling many disease-carrying and crop-harming insects. They save US farmers over \$1 billion annually!

5) Fruit-eating bats spread seeds as they fly and digest food, which reseeds deforested land.

6) The smallest bat in the world is the Kitties Hog-nosed Bat, also known as the Bumblebee Bat. It weighs as much as a dime and has a six-inch wingspan. Small bats are called microbats and are found all over the world. They are the only bats found in North and South America. They have large ears, small eyes, small bodies, and use echolocation to find food. They eat a wide range of food, including: insects, nectar, fish, fruit, frogs, and blood.

7) Nectar-feeding bats pollinate many valuable plants including bananas, balsa wood, agave, mangoes, and cashews.

8) In addition to sight, many species of bats have ultrasonic sonar capabilities (echolocation), which they use to navigate and catch insects in total darkness.

9) There are three species of vampire bats that drink blood from non-human animals such as cows, pigs, goats, and chickens. These small bats live in southern Mexico, Central America, and South America.

10) The largest bat in the world is the Malayan Flying Fox. It weighs two pounds and has a six-foot wingspan! Large bats are called megabats, or flying foxes, because their faces look like the face of the dog. All megabats live in Africa, Asia, or Australia and consume only fruit nectar.



For more information about bats, visit www.batconservation.org
and www.batslive.pwnet.org



ORGANIZATION FOR
BAT CONSERVATION
@BATVETHERATS

Make a Bat for Bat Week 2017



A.C. MOORE ARTS & CRAFTS
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supplies

sturdy paper or foam sheets (any color)
clothes pin
scissors
glue

optional

googly eyes
paint for clothes pin
markers for decorating
sequins or other decorations

Write one cool fact about bats on the front or back of the bat wings.

Make sure the clothes pin is attached correctly so the bat can hang upside down!

Return your bat to any Montana Fish, Wildlife and Parks office and we will proudly display it!! Watch our Facebook page for photos of all the bats we receive.